

THE FIRST
Quarta-Centennial Celebration

OF THE
KAPPA ALPHA SOCIETY,

HELD AT SCHENECTADY,

ON TUESDAY, JULY 22, 1851.

Schenectady:
RIGGS, PRINTER—OFFICE OF THE CABINET.

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Kappa Alpha

QUARTA-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION.

IN accordance with previous arrangements, the KAPPA ALPHA SOCIETY held its First Quarta-Centennial Celebration, in connection with the customary Commencement Exercises of Union College, on Tuesday, July 22, 1851.

At the appointed hour in the morning, the members of the Society assembled in the Junior Chapel of the College, and from thence marched in procession, under the marshalship of Professor JACKSON, to the Presbyterian Church. The Exercises were introduced with an appropriate and eloquent Prayer, by the Rev. JOHN M. HUNTER, D. D., of the Class of 1826. An Oration was then delivered by DAN MARVIN, Esq., of the Class of 1831, and a Poem pronounced by S. MILLS DAY, of the Class of 1850, to a highly intelligent and attentive audience. The publication of these productions, in connection with this brief record of the occasion upon which they were presented, renders comment in regard to their character unnecessary. The morning exercises were closed with the pronouncing of the Benediction by the Rev. Dr. HUNTER.

In the evening of the same day, followed a re-union of the assembled brotherhood around the festive board of olden time. The brilliancy of wit, the melody of song, the eloquence of educated intellect, in turn largely contributed to the interest of the occasion. Reminiscences of the Past, and anticipations of the Future—expressions of sorrow for the dead, with expressions of hope for the living, followed and intermingled with each other, in all their varied hues of light and shade. At length, at a late hour, the assemblage reluctantly separated; to remember with unalloyed gratification and pleasure the Quarta-Centennial Celebration of the Kappa Alpha Society in 1851.

The three Chapters,—Union, Williams, and Geneva, were efficiently represented. Letters were received from many of the Alumni, who, though unable to be present on the occasion, gave the fullest assurances of their regard for the Society in time past, and their best wishes for its prosperity in time to come.

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ORATION.

BRETHREN OF THE KAPPA ALPHA SOCIETY :

IN appearing before you at this time, I have only to regret that you have not called upon some more distinguished and eminent member of this Society, whose reputation might have given dignity to this Celebration, and whose performance would have added to its interest. But your decree has called on me for this task, and I may not as a loyal son of Kappa Alpha decline its performance.

One quarter of a century has elapsed since our Society was founded. Its beginning was an humble one ; and in this it followed the general law which governs the origin and increase of the productions of nature and the inventions of man.

A few under-graduates of this College, led perhaps by previous acquaintance, by congeniality of mind, by a desire to form a more perfect union in the bonds of that love and friendship which already united them,—to advance, promote, and encourage each other's improvement in learning, science, and appropriate literary exercises, laid the foundation of our Society.

Its growth from such a beginning has been vigorous and rapid.

The parent Society of this College, has seen, from year to year, her sons go forth nobly furnished for the battle of life, and ready to do and to dare all that noble and honorable impulses, deep and varied learning, elevated aims could achieve ; and her daughter branches, “*Mater Pulchra*,” “*Filiæ Pulchriores*,” have well and nobly followed in her footsteps.

The sons of Kappa Alpha have been distinguished amongst their fellow-men. The halls of Congress have many times echoed with that

eloquence of breathing thoughts and burning words which had first been inspired by, and whose first accents had been heard in the halls of our Society.

Hardly a session of our State Legislature passes which is not adorned by the presence of some of the sons of Kappa Alpha. They fill all the walks of public and professional life. Eloquent Divines, Presidents of Colleges and Seminaries, learned Professors whose reputation is co-extensive with our country and extends to the farthest bounds of civilization, dignified Judges who grace and adorn their stations, profound Lawyers and eloquent Advocates, Physicians, eminent in their profession, and accomplished men of letters,—such are they whose names stud the bright arch of her firmament, and in long and splendid line mark the bright triumphs of her progress.

The succession of bright names with which her catalogue is resplendent, can hardly be paralleled in the annals of any similar association. From year to year new and worthy names are enrolled in the glorious catalogue, and we may predict for her a yet prouder destiny in the times yet to come. For certain it is, that as long as good letters and sound learning shall continue to abide in the colleges where she has found a home, so long shall her name, her honors and her praises endure.

But, I come not to praise the living : they are with, amongst and around us, and we point to them as the Roman matron did to her noble sons,—“ Behold, these are my jewels.”

But one thing I may mention with pride and gratification : twenty years have elapsed since I left these honored Halls, and in all that time it has not fallen to my lot to hear of one of the sons of Kappa Alpha who has disgraced his birthright, or upon whose name any cloud of blame or reproach has fallen. All have not attained the highest honors and distinctions, it is true, in their several walks of life ; but all have achieved a useful and honorable position—all are bright stars in the crown of Kappa Alpha ; and if all be not stars of the first magnitude, still they only differ from each other as one star exceedeth another star in glory.

During the twenty-five years that our Society has existed, we have many times been called to mourn over the tombs of those who are no more with us on earth. Would that it were in my power to pronounce a fitting eulogy upon our beloved and honored dead. But I have not the facts at hand, nor the time necessary to perform this pious work; and to others more fortunate be it reserved to perpetuate the names, the memories, and the worthy deeds of the departed. They rest from their labors and their works do follow them; and when the last trump, the knell of the creation shall sound, and when clothed upon with immortal and glorified bodies, we shall claim our kindred skies, then may we join in full fellowship to meet our dear and departed ones no more to part through an endless eternity.

The Society will, I trust, pardon a few reminiscences of those of whom personal friendship enables me to speak.

On the thirty-first day of October, in the year 1836, a ship sailed from Baltimore for Cape Palmas, in Africa. As her white sails were loosed to the ocean breeze, many a hand was uplifted, and many a prayer ascended from full hearts for her safe and prosperous passage. She bore a precious freight, for in her cabins and upon her decks walked the Reverend DAVID WHITE, who had embarked as a Missionary to Africa, and his young and newly married wife. Prosperously and with favoring gales did that gallant vessel speed over the waves and enter her destined haven, and the self-devoted Missionary leaped from her decks to bear the banner of the Cross, and to preach the glad tidings of salvation to the dusky men who bowed down to idols and trembled at the dread incantations of the Fetish.

He, whose name I have thus brought before you, was emphatically the first in the class which graduated from this College in the year 1831—of which class I was a member. He was emphatically the first. He was first in industry, first in scholarship, first in the affection of his class-mates, and first in the favor and estimation of the venerable President and learned Professors. But what may more interest the members of this Society, during a portion of his college course he was the presiding officer of our Fraternity.

I can call him before me now with his manly form, his dignified yet courteous address, his pleasant smile removed alike from rude and boisterous mirth and a melancholy asceticism.

It is well known to Students that young men intended for the ministry are seldom popular in colleges. Their presence is sometimes a restraint upon the hilarity of their more volatile companions ; sometimes a zeal little tempered with discretion, leads them to rebuke or reprove harshly their fellows or to attempt their reform, at times or by means ill calculated to attain these ends, and they are not sought for as companions or associates in the wild pranks that sometimes give variety to the uniformity of college life.

But it was high praise to DAVID WHITE that he surmounted all these obstacles, and that he was at once beloved, prized and esteemed by his fellow-students, and that too without at any time or in any degree lending himself to the follies or extravagances of others.

Graduating with the first honors of the College, he next sought the Theological Seminary of Princeton, at which he passed through the usual course of study in a manner highly creditable, and was invested according to the forms of his own church with the sacred ministry of the Gospel.

He had attained the mark at which he had long aimed. The distinctions awarded to talent in the church were before him. He might be the beloved and honored pastor, the eloquent preacher, perchance the learned president, professor, or lecturer, and he might pass a life of graceful dignity, honored, esteemed and beloved amongst men.

But from all this he had turned away, and following what he deemed the path of duty, had consecrated his life, his talents, and his services to the cause of missions to the heathen world. His was a genuine and Christian philanthropy, which did not content itself with staying at home and noisily denouncing evils which it at the same time did not seek or attempt to remedy. He was content to hazard life, talents, prospects, and all that the heart holds dear, to carry Christianity and civilization to the shores of Africa ; to stop the polluted slave-trade at its fountain, and to aid in founding a community where the slave, with

his arms freed from their manacles, might breathe the air of liberty, and attain the bearing and attitude of a man.

He entered with zeal and success upon the missionary work, — preaching to the natives, teaching and visiting them, — and in a short time became greatly beloved and respected. But of him in his work of love and mercy, it might truly have been said, —

“Ostendent terris hunc tantum fata
Nec ultra esse sinent.”

A few weeks completed his work. He died of the pestilential fever of the climate, and was soon followed by his young and devoted wife. They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their deaths they were not divided.

Their remains rest in the lowly grave where they were laid in the missionary burying ground, hallowing and consecrating that distant shore; but many a time and oft, at morn or even tide, shall the dusky sons and daughters of Africa come to weep over their tombs and scatter the fresh flowers of spring, frail emblems of our mortality and also emblems of a glorious resurrection.

Would that this tribute which friendship has prompted, and which with this day's scenes shall be lost or forgotten, might lead to the erection to his memory, somewhere upon the classic grounds of Union, of some stone or monument which might speak of his memory; or, if no more can be accomplished, at least the literary society of which he was a member could not more fittingly decorate their hall or library, than by some bust or portrait, or votive tablet, which should keep alive his remembrance.

Brethren — may his memory be ever sacred, even revered in our conclave; and when we call to mind the names of that noble army of martyrs who have borne and planted the Cross amongst heathen nations and to the farthest bounds of earth, — the names of Schwarts, and Martin, and Brainard, and Heber, and Judson, and Grant, let us in our minds associate with them a name not unworthy of such companionship — that of DAVID WHITE.

The catalogue of our departed members brings next before me the name of RUFUS BEACH GREGORY, a class-mate and a friend, distin-

guished for scholarship and for many shining qualities of head and heart. But, alas, he only entered upon the business of life for which his attainments so well fitted him. The energies of his physical nature had broken down under a long and severe course of study, and he died in Florida, where he had gone in the hope that a milder climate might restore him to health.

WELLS S. HAMMOND, the son of the Hon. Jabez D. Hammond, of Cherry Valley, was long an intimate friend and associate of mine; we were law students together in his father's office, and our intimacy was not broken when he entered upon the duties of his arduous profession. He was an only child, and every advantage which wealth could give was afforded him for storing his mind with knowledge.

He was a ripe scholar and a good one, deeply learned in ancient lore and familiar with modern literature. He combined in an eminent degree a sound judgment with a playful fancy and a brilliant imagination.

He had gone through the prescribed course of legal study and entered upon the practical duties of his profession, in which he was fast rising to distinction when he was summoned to bid adieu to the scenes of earth.

He died suddenly at Albany, where he had gone to argue an important cause, having left home in perfect health.

Time will only allow me to allude to one more cherished name,—that of CHARLES D. BETTS. He was the son of the Hon. Justice Betts, of the city of New-York. He was a graduate of Williams College, and my first acquaintance with him commenced in the city of New-York, where he was then Clerk of the District Court.

Though he had been but a few years in active business, he had amassed a considerable estate, and was beloved and esteemed for his solid endowments and estimable character. Modest, unassuming and unaffected, pleasing in his manners, frank and open in his address, he won upon the hearts of all who had the good fortune to make his acquaintance.

And above all, and as the crowning point of his character, he was an humble and sincere Christian, and when the message came to summon him to the unseen world, it found him not unprepared. He

had laid up his treasures where moth and rust doth not corrupt ; and when his Master called he was ready to depart. One trait in his character deserves honorable mention : his systematic charity. One-tenth of his income from the time he commenced the business of life, was regularly and systematically devoted during his life, and one-tenth part of the bulk of his estate at his death, to charitable and religious purposes.

I would gladly, had I time, speak of THOMAS J. FARNHAM, who was distinguished and celebrated as one of the early pioneers who led the way to the distant shores of Oregon : of BUTLER GOODRICH, the scholar, the gentleman, and the Christian : of HENRY C. RATHBUN, one of nature's noblemen, who was to me more than a friend or a brother : of CYRUS M. FAY, a class-mate who has died within the past year. But I must close these recollections of the past. Standing here at the end of twenty years, almost the period of a generation, it is natural I should look back to the friends I knew and loved, and should wish to speak of them and their many virtues.

And as the Roman noble was wont on solemn days to have borne before him the images of his ancestors, even so I would wish that we should bring before our memories those separated ones who, once with us, have gone to their rest, and while we enjoy the hallowed season of this jubilee, let us not repress the tear which may start unbidden to their memories.

Pass we to topics of a more general character, and let us contemplate for a few moments our *own position and duties, and those of others following the same pursuits as ourselves as members of the great republic of letters.*

We have been privileged to enter the temple of science, and to partake of the rich entertainment she has provided ; but our talents, our attainments, our industry and energies are not our own ; they are given, or rather lent to us, and are to be employed in the service and glory of the Giver, and in benefitting the condition of our fellow-men.

One of the first and most obvious duties, is the preservation and transmission to future generations of all the knowledge that is now in the world, and the increase of it by our own researches.

It is the law of our nature, that everything earthly should have but a limited duration. In the course of events generation succeeds generation, and as the learned of one age pass from the stage of being, their knowledge perishes with them, except the small part that may be preserved in books or in the monuments of the past.

Had not this universal law of mortality prevailed, one can imagine what a glorious flood of knowledge might now be irradiating our earth. Had it been allowed to all the great and learned of the earth to live here for countless ages to retain all the knowledge they possessed, and to go on from step to step, making new discoveries, enlarging their acquaintance with the mysteries of nature, and constantly increasing and extending the resources, the inventions and the productions of art, to what a degree of advancement might we not have attained !

We should not have to mourn over lost and perished arts, nor been compelled to glean the history of nations from the dim and misty traditions of the past. Ancient sages and modern savans might have together explored the arcana of knowledge ; Homer and Virgil, Tasso and Milton, might now be tuning their harps to poetic strains whose sweetness, beauty and sublimity, far beyond what we can comprehend or conceive, might ravish the world with heavenly harmony.

But such is not the order of Providence. When men die, the knowledge which they possessed must perish with them, unless it has been by them transmitted to some one who can in like manner hand it down to succeeding generations. Constantly and silently goes on the destruction of human knowledge, experience and skill.

The lips of the sage cease to speak wisdom, the voice of the orator is hushed in silence, the harp-strings of the poet are broken and their music is no more heard.

Let us pause at the end of any one year and see how many learned and distinguished men have fallen during its course, and we can then comprehend in part how much the world is constantly losing by death.

Says an old lawyer, in the quaint language of his time, "when a great learned man dieth, much learning dieth with him."

Nor is it only by the death of great men that learning perishes. Every man, whatever his position in life, has some peculiar knowledge

or skill which no one else possesses, and when the knowledge and practice of any science and art is found amongst a limited body of men, the loss of every one that dies narrows the circle and creates a void that can only be filled up by the education of some one to fill the place of the fallen.

Let a period of thirty years elapse, and all who are now upon the stage of life will have passed away.

Where, then, will be the wisdom, the learning, the intellectual greatness of the present generation?—Gone, forever!

From this continual perishing of knowledge, we deduce the duty of each generation to transmit to that which succeeds it, the knowledge which itself possesses, and also the correlative duty of the succeeding generation to receive and hand down the precious legacy to those who are to follow, and at the same time to increase to the utmost the precious deposit.

Nor is this the work of a few persons. All to whom talent and opportunity are afforded, may find ample employment in cultivating the fair fields of modern science.

The present age exceeds all that have gone before in the extent and variety of science and knowledge which it possesses. While the learning of the ancient world might have been likened to the ark of the covenant, containing the tablets of the law and a few parchment scrolls, which a few priests could easily bear on their shoulders, that of modern times is more like the triumph of a Roman conqueror, in whose train marched an army bending under the burthen of the accumulated treasures of empires and kingdoms.

Another consideration which comes with force to address itself to the educated and the learned, is the duty of devoting all our faculties and powers to the benefit of mankind. The modern world has very much to do. She has governments to administer, laws to enact and promulgate, expound and enforce, a Gospel to be preached to the rich and the poor throughout the world. She has sickness and disease to combat with in their common forms, and also when they take the form of the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and the sickness that destroyeth at noon-day.

She has science to be explored, and arts to be perfected and practiced ; trade, commerce and manufactures to be carried on ; and last, but not least, the great business of education ; to furnish, and have in readiness the new recruits who are to fill the places of all who fall in her service.

Somewhere in this magnificent drama of life, which is now going forward, will be found room, and place, and work for all the learned, the educated and the talented. For, all those things which I have enumerated, and many more of equal importance, call for the aid of knowledge, of education, of talent, to carry them on. Knowledge does not now shut herself up in the retirement of the philosopher, or immure herself in the cloister of the monk, but even as in Homeric fiction we read that the gods came down from heaven to mingle in the combats of men ; so in modern times has science mingled in all the affairs, and arts, and enterprises of mankind.

The great craving for the age is for men to do her work ; and they must be had if the present grade of civilization is to be kept up, and if advance and improvement are to go on as they have done for the last century.

And not only must every position, where knowledge and talent are needed, be now occupied, but the vacancies must be filled up, the ranks of the great army must be kept always full.

And as the triumphant march of human progress goes on, we expect that new sciences, new arts, and new fields of employment will continually call for those who have the gift of talent and ability to come and occupy them. What a vast field for intellectual labor is presented by our own country, with her thirty-one states, stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and comprising an empire of happy communities, such as, before, the sun never shone upon, and all kept by the power of knowledge in their present advanced and happy condition, and to look to it for all the advance and improvement which they are to make.

The next consideration to which I shall bespeak your attention is the duty of all who would take part in doing this work of the modern world, to qualify themselves for what they are to do.

This requires the most persevering industry, begun at the preparatory school, continued in the college, and carried on through the whole course of life. There is no place in the ranks of the votaries of science for the indolent, the man of pleasure, the effeminate, or the degraded in mind or in body.

These are not they who shall ascend into the hill of science or stand in the holy places of her temple.

Most of the young, when they enter upon life, will be apt to fancy that they are occupying stations below what their qualifications deserve.

But do not let this discourage any one. Others can judge our abilities far better than we can ourselves.

The way to rise is, not to be discontented with the present, but to strive for the future.

If the young professional man, or the man in any other calling, finds little to do, or if he finds his services sought mainly in the lower walks of his profession or calling, let him not be discouraged. The leisure he can command may be well employed in study, where it will yield a rich return; and the employ, humble though it be, will be a preparatory school, so to speak, for something higher.

The law of human progress, in knowledge, in reputation, in talent, and intellectual power, is analogous to the law of nature in her productions, and to the course of events in the history of our race. When nature designs an oak, she begins with an acorn; when an empire is to be founded, a small band of adventurers, the inmates of some Mayflower or Speedwell, are found to lay the foundations.

When Christianity was to be preached throughout the world, the mission was not given to the learned philosophers of Rome or Greece, but to the poor fishermen of Galilee. And so when a great or eminent man is to be produced: step by step he rises, increasing in wisdom, in experience, in intellectual and moral power, and at the same time advancing in station, in reputation and estimation, until he has attained the summit of his greatness.

Those who like not the toil of the ascent to eminence and greatness, but choose to repose by the wayside, will never reach the summit.

Those who do not choose to row their boat against the stream, but rest on their oars, will be borne down with the current.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, whether of toil or study, do it with all thy might, for now is the accepted time.

The past is gone, and has only left its memories, pleasant or painful, of a well or ill-spent life. The future we have no certainty of commanding, but the present is ever with us. Let no one say, to-morrow, or next week, or next year, I will study and get knowledge, or will work and toil.

Our history and the history of every civilized nation abounds with instances of men who have achieved greatness from humble stations, who have gone through the process of education, study and training, which has, by degrees, fitted them for exalted positions.

More than fifty years since, in a small frontier settlement of this State, a young clergyman ministered in the humble village church, and instructed the youth of the place in the rudiments of learning. This was the early probation of him whose reputation is now world-wide—the eloquent divine, the accomplished scholar, the venerable and beloved College President.

The building yet stands which was the scene of his labors. The village was Cherry Valley, and the young minister was the Rev. ELIPHALET NOTT.

Who can tell how much of that deep knowledge of human natures that exquisite tact and address, that successful mastery over the mind and hearts of youth, possessed by the venerable President, were learned in the humble village Academy.

How many instances of rise from lowly stations does the world exhibit. And when we turn to our own country, we find that our Clays and our Websters, our Clintons and Van Burens, and our own Fillmore, and hundreds of other illustrious names that adorn our annals, have all sprung forward by the force of talent and industry, till they have attained the eminence they now hold.

There is a common mistake in considering general education complete at the termination of a course of study at a college or seminary, and the same mistake in regarding a professional education complete

at the end of the prescribed period of study, or upon admission to its actual duties.

The most diligent use of time will only enable the learner during these periods to attain a bare outline of the science he may have chosen to learn,—an outline to be afterwards filled up by a more full and general course of reading and study.

This study must not only embrace and comprehend the wisdom of the past, but must from time to time take in the new discoveries, inventions and labors of the present. Whoever neglects this constant course of study, will find that he is getting behind the times in point of knowledge and skill, and also that he is losing in intellectual power.

The treasury out of which are to be brought things new and old, must be constantly replenished, or else the new things will have become old, and will have lost their brightness and lustre.

The cask constantly drawn from without replenishing, will cease to furnish the nectar, fit drink for the gods, and will yield only sour lees, repugnant to the palate of both gods and men, and fit only to be turned into the kennel.

Pass a few years without study, in reliance upon existing resources, however ample, and you will find yourself failing and depreciating; and before you are aware, you are an incompetent man, and will find that you are laid on the shelf as a piece of the machinery of society that has had its day, but is now superseded by something better suited to the times and the work to be done. You may take your seat with the incapables,—you can no longer do the work you undertook to do,—you can neither guide the steed nor apply the lash, and you must look on while some more able charioteer slides into your place.

Another duty which educated men owe to the world is the dissemination of truth and the confutation of error, wherever they may exist.

The world is full of those who would advance their own unproved speculations to the dignity of scientific truth.

They boldly ask that we should add to the discoveries of Newton, La Place, and Davy, the speculations of the phrenologist, the rhapsodies of the animal magnetizer, or clairvoyant, or the wretched impos-

tures of the Rochester knockers ; that we should place by the side of Locke, and Stewart, and Brown, and Reid, the vagaries of the German pantheist, the jargon of the transcendentalist, or the visionary drivings of Andrew Jackson Davis.

Our answer must be, — Science can only consist of things known or proved : within the limits and bounds to which her investigations extend, she can speak with absolute or moral certainty, or reasonable probability. All beyond these limits is the region of fancy or speculation, into which she cannot venture, and from which she cannot adopt anything as part of her treasures or trophies.

If what is claimed to be science is in conflict with well known facts, — if it is unsupported by observation or experiment, — if it ranges beyond the proper limits of scientific investigation, it must be rejected, denounced and exposed.

There is another class of errors more baneful in their influence upon the world. We have those who teach that our bibles are cunningly devised fables, our holy religion a fabric reared by priestcraft and superstition, — that there is no just distinction between right and wrong, vice and virtue, and that all the existing institutions of society and government are based upon false principles, and must be subverted in order to bring about that good time which is to come, when their wretched theories and dogmas shall bear sway over the world, and the sceptre of this false philosophy shall wave over the ruins of all that is fair and lovely.

The world is grown wiser now by experience than it was sixty years ago, when the infidel philosophers of France overturned the church and the state and established a reign of terror and bloodshed, and yet the last three years have witnessed horrors that can only be compared with the blood-stained annals of the first revolution.

Sixty years ago the infidels of Europe and America were looking with confidence for the approaching downfall of the Christian religion ; but we have lived to witness its triumph and diffusion to an extent unparalleled in the annals of the world since the days of its meek and lowly Founder.

We do not fear the triumph of infidelity, the subversion of civil government, nor the destruction of the laws and institutions of society, for to do so were to doubt the providence of God and to distrust his mercy and justice. But we know that He works by human instruments, means and agencies, and that He opposes the talents and labors of the wise and the good to defeat and confound the devices of the wicked and base.

We know that this great battle between truth and error has been going on ever since that primal disobedience which “*brought death into the world,*” and we know that it will last through all time. May we, and may all to whom talents and education may give influence, exert it in the cause of Christianity and sound morals in the community, and of law and good order in the state.

It only remains that I should speak of the sure reward which will be reaped by the possession of learning, talent and ability. Men have come to prefer the useful to the *merely ornamental*. The question is not—what you are? or who you are? but what can you do?

You may be the descendant of princes or nobles, —you may stagger under an emblazonry of jewels, ribbons and trappings, —you may flourish a full purse, through the interstices of which the yellow gold will shine and glitter; but unless you can do some of the work which the world has in hand, you may stand aside; you belong to the class of incapables, the idols of a former generation, and none shall be found to bow before your shrines, or sweep the dust from the threshold of your temples.

A new aristocracy has arisen, —that of genius, learning and talent; and the world is bowing down to do it homage. It is not now as it was in the days of Solomon, where no one remembered the poor wise man who had delivered the city. Intellectual power now holds the sceptre, and every other social element bows down before it.

It needs no herald's office, no emblazonry or trappings. The simple annals of its triumphs are a heraldry far surpassing that of stars, ribbons and garters.

The men of learning, genius and talent, are the nobility of the land, and before them the distinctions of wealth, family and fortune sink into insignificance.

The kings and nobles of the old world paled and trembled before the peasant of Ajaccio; the humble cadet of Brienne; and the haughty peers of England have more than once found their master in the untitled commoner, — the Peel, the Canning, or the Russell, of the day, — before whose brightness their imaginary greatness stood rebuked and humbled. And in our own country, what are the historical names in our annals which are the brightest emblazoned upon the roll of fame? Are they not our Henrys and Adams, our Clintons and Van Burens, our Clays and Websters and Calhouns?

The career of talent is open to all, and all may share its honors and rewards proportioned to their talents, attainments and industry.

Every year adds to the discoveries and inventions of man, and presents new fields where educated men are wanted, and may find useful and honorable employ.

As one, then, of a fraternity of men of letters, I would say, — this is no time for sloth or inaction, nor for the cultivation of literary pursuits for mere amusement or selfish gratification. The educated man may not sit still to enjoy the luxury of his own thoughts, even though they should be filled with visions of heavenly beauty; but the pen must trace, or the tongue must utter, and it must be given to the world to read the inspired vision.

Our honor and happiness, the rewards we may expect, and the distinction we may attain to, will all be best reached by the faithful employment of our time, our talents, our energies and resources in the advancement of knowledge and the service of our fellow-men.

POEM.

Trials and Triumphs.

UPON a high, o'erhanging cliff, beside the sounding sea,
An Eagle there her eyrie kept, unfettered, tameless, free.
A tender Eaglet patiently she reared with zealous care,
That he in turn himself might be a habitant of air.
At length the hour of trial came ; full fledged, but yet unflown,
Was he to tempt the ether void, unfathomed and unknown.
The Eagle stirred up her nest, and casting out her young,
Him far adown the giddy steep relentlessly she flung.
Awhile he sank, with fluttering wing, bewildered, toward the sea,
Yet quick recovering, fearless still, and striving mightily,
He rose and sank, then rose again, with an unconquered will,
That yielding not, unfaltering, would ceaseless struggle still.
And soon a steadier stroke he gained ; and then, as if of might,
And power, and triumph due, self-conscious, as of eagle-right,
With sterner energy he rose ; then mounting up on high,
With strong, broad pinions, uttering his glad, exulting cry,
With fierce and quivering mandibles and flashing eye of fire,
He onward and he upward swept : and higher still and higher
Looked down on sea and shore and cliff ; nor ceasing still to rise,
Was lost at length from earth to view in clear and cloudless skies.

To him who thoughtfully regards the theatre of life,
Its changing scenes, its rest and toil, its quiet and its strife,

This truth is plain and undisguised, nor one of mysteries —
 Life's trials to life's triumphs join by undiscovered ties.
 To greatness there is no high road, nor royal pathway given,
 In which with loitering steps to gain the immortal heights of heaven.
 By earnest action, patient toil, 'mid fortunes dark and bright —
 By the intensest suffering to vindicate the right
 In times that sternly try men's souls, are noble triumphs won,
 Or made an honor to the source whence they at first begun.
 And Nature clearly teaches this ; the gold of highest worth
 Flows from the hottest crucible ; from darkest mines come forth
 The diamond and jewel rare ; in seas of depth unknown
 The coral and the gleaming pearl are found, and there alone.
 Dark shadows veil the sky before the radiant bow appears,
 And still its brightest glories shine amid those falling tears.
 In things more animate 'tis seen ; the unpretending worm,
 And then the lifeless chrysalis of mummy-insect form,
 Precede, and are essential to, the creature fair and bright,
 That revels like some winged flower, in life and joy and light.
 But chiefest doth Humanity this self-same truth proclaim —
 That triumphs without trials gain no great or lasting fame :
 Nay—'tis no triumph, if unwon 'mid wrestling hopes and fears,
 And humble labor, strivings long, and consecrating tears.
 In Life's great battle none may win true honor or renown,
 Except through long-enduring toil he gain the laurel-crown.
 Inaction, listless indolence, to sensual slaves belong ;
 Strivings in thought, in word, in act, to the mighty and the strong.
 Greatness is no commercial bauble which the vulgar gold
 Of any mindless fool may gain ; 'tis neither bought nor sold.
 Nor more is it inherited ; of all inanities
 The chief is royal fame—the vanity of vanities.
 There is a right, indeed, to rule, a right unpeered to shine ;
 But tis an earned, not gifted right, the only “right divine.”

All honor to the noble soul alike serenely great
 Within the humble cottage-home, within the chair of state ;

Who will bear up, full-nerved, beneath the sternest woes of life—
 Of steadfast arm, of trusting heart, in every changing strife ;
 Who acts from high-toned Principle, the Jove upon the throne,
 Whose rule the Passions, Titan-like, rebellious, yet must own ;
 Who of right action wearies not, amid depressing gloom,
 Save as it wearies stars to shine, or flowers to waft perfume ;
 Who ever seeks unfaltering the truest aims and ends,
 And each opposing obstacle to its own purpose bends ;
 Though dark adversities like darker clouds high o'er each other rise,
 Along the steep ascent it mounts aspiring to the skies.

And such is human destiny—yet trials often bring
 A blessedness unknown except through deepest suffering.
 The very contrast ever gives the more intense delight,
 As Hesperus the brighter beams with gathering shades of night.
 The stricken invalid knows not a more entrancing sense,
 Than that the heart's pulsations first in health regained, dispense.
 No moment has more preciousness, all unalloyed with pain,
 To the sad exile, as he greets his native home again.
 The lone night-watcher deems no light so beauteous to the eye,
 As that whose first faint-gleaming rays illumine the eastern sky.
 Nor is this contrast source alone in which these joys are found,
 But blessings great and manifold dark trials cluster round.
 While Israel slept good angels watched beside his stony bed ;
 And heaven appeared unveiled above the untented pilgrim's head.
 The desert-wanderers beheld Jehovah's presence nigh
 In great and mighty miracles, in signs and wonders high,
 Unknown in Canaan's favored clime ; and with the noble three
 Who served their God above their king, devout and faithfully,
 As they unawed and slaveless still the fiery furnace trod,
 Appeared a fourth of form divine, like to the Son of God.

So teaches strict Philosophy—that trials antecede
 All triumphs : but be ours a higher and a truer creed—
 That equal triumphs must as sure from equal trials spring,
 And every dark adversity its glad fruition bring.

That there is no heart-misery abiding on forever,
 And earth has no forsaken spot the sunlight blesses never ;
 Or if on earth to suffering no sweet relief be given,
 Our hopes, like sunset-tintings fair, shall vanish into heaven.

Why is it, that around our path dark shadows veil the light ?
 Why on the fairest flowers must fall the quick, consuming blight ?
 The circling stars, the floating cloud, the glowing tints of even,
 In their supernal loveliness awhile to us are given,
 Only alike to fade away : those beauteous forms of grace,
 The shrines of spirits pure and true, wherein we clearly trace
 The fair ideals only known to our serenest hours,
 When life is joy, and earth itself a paradise of flowers,
 From our communings pass away ; and we are left to mourn,
 Bowed down in utter loneliness beside the funeral urn.

But are they lost forever ? No — there is a happier clime,
 A larger and a purer life, unknown to earth or time :
 A clime with light ineffable, unveiled by midnight gloom,
 Beside whose living streams the fairest flowers perennial bloom.
 A clime beyond the circling stars, the floating cloud, the sky
 All radiant with its glowing hues ; there all beneath it lie.
 There with the loved and lost of earth, undestined more to sever,
 In their glad presence shall we dwell in blessedness forever.

Brethren, be this our guiding Faith — a trusting Faith sublime,
 That triumphs o'er the adversities of ever-changing time :
 That quails not at approaching death ; but, tranquil and serene,
 While even Hope, with drooping wing, with sad desponding mein,
 Sinks at her elder sister's feet, lifts up her radiant eye,
 Awaiting through the long night-vigil, still and steadfastly
 The dawning of that glorious morn, whose clear, resplendent ray,
 Shall usher in with life and light, one glad, eternal day.